

RIPEES visit in Hungary

The next professional meeting of RIPESS Europe organisation (Réseaux Intercontinental de Promotion de l'Économie Sociale et Solidaire, Europe) which is organised in a network of initiatives on social and solidarity economy in European level was held in Hungary.

The guests who were invited by National Alliance of Subregional Development Organisations (KIFESZ) – European members of RIPESS - were received by the colleagues of the Alliance and Herman Ottó Institution in Budapest. As a part of the meeting the delegates of RIPESS Europe were taken part in a study visit in Szentendre island on 26th September, 2016. They visited the local producer economy by the Hungarian family organised by Dunakanyar-Pilis Local Product Social Cooperatives. Furthermore they received comprehensive information on the local economic development intention and notion of the narrow region by the help of invited speakers. The range of products of Tahitótfalu Market which is held every week was also discussed where a lot of local producers showed their products. Hereafter the participants could get to know the work of 'Esztergom Small basket Community' and the ideas of 'Eco Island' of Szentendre. The afternoon program continued with a professional forum in Apor Vimos House where the activity of Herman Ottó Institution was presented by its colleagues focusing on their developments based on real cooperation in rural areas. The construction of a project application called 'Gentle regional development models in practice' was presented by Rita Kandikó KIFESZ member. The project has run under the coordination of the institution and supported by the National Development Ministry. As a part of the forum dr. Éva Fekete, docent of Miskolc University, formal president of KIFESZ presented the local social, economic development efforts and the situations of social cooperatives to the foreign participants.

The representatives of RIPESS Europe introduced several good practices and positive examples to the national participants and told them they are open for all kinds of cooperation where the main aim is to reach higher approach of social benefits and the principles of sustainable development are reflected.

RIPESS Europe took its external autumn Coordinative Commission meeting also in Budapest. One of the main important items of the meeting was the possibility of the middle-European expansion of the European network and the inclusion of young people into the organisation. Coordinative Commission would like Hungary to host a middle-east-European meeting in spring 2017 where RIPESS Europe could introduce and ensure a professional meeting, exchange of experience for social entrepreneurs in middle-east-Europe. The preparation of annual general meeting of RIPESS Europe in Athens, Greece in July 2017 and a conference on social and solidarity economy, organised every two years has already started in the commission meeting. The European organisation has also started to prepare the event of the second European Forum on Social and Solidarity Economies which will be organised in European Parliament, Brussels in April 2017.

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